

Health Service Directive

Directive # <insert number here>

Effective Date: 01 January 2013

Review Date: 01 January 2016

Supersedes: New directive

Patient Access and Flow

Purpose

This Health Service Directive directs Hospital and Health Services to take a consistent approach to managing patient access and flow and to comply with Protocols to facilitate timely access into and through all Queensland public hospitals.

Scope

This directive applies to all Hospital and Health Services.

Principles

- Access - optimise patient flow and access across the patient journey from hospital admission to discharge
- Integration - whole of system approach to patient flow and access.
- Safety - optimise patient safety, outcomes and quality of clinical care.
- Efficiency - effective use of resources for Hospital and Health Services and Queensland Ambulance Service
- Collaboration - support collaboration and interface between Hospital and Health Services and the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS).

Outcomes

Hospital and Health Services will achieve the following outcomes:

- Compliance with the Protocol for Capacity Escalation Response
- Compliance with the Protocol for Inpatient Admission Facilitation
- Compliance with the Protocol for Inter Hospital Transfer (IHT)
- Compliance with the Protocol for Patient Off Stretcher Time (POST)
- Compliance with the Protocol for Road Inter Hospital Transfer (IHT) of Critically Ill Patients

Hospital and Health Services may wish to adopt (or amend for adoption and implementation) the Guideline for implementation of the Clinical Initiatives Nurse (CIN) role in Emergency Departments

Mandatory requirements

Hospital and Health Services will:

- Assume 24 hour responsibility for Emergency Department (ED) access.
- Provide a single point of contact for the QAS to enable ED access issues to be addressed 24 hours/day.
- Ensure “ambulance bypass” is not utilised except in the event of an internal or external disaster.
- Optimise patient flow and bed management strategies by actively utilising predictive bed management tools and patient flow management systems.
- Ensure clinical staff undertake mandatory training to clarify the roles and scope of practice for Queensland Ambulance Service staff.
- Ensure all patients arriving by ambulance are triaged on arrival.
- Ensure no patient is returned to the ambulance after triage.

Related or governing legislation, policy and agreements

- *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- National Healthcare Agreement 2012
- National Health Reform Agreement 2011

Supporting documents

- Protocol for Capacity Escalation Response
- Protocol for Inpatient Admission Facilitation
- Protocol for Inter Hospital Transfer (IHT)
- Protocol for Patient Off Stretcher Time (POST)
- Protocol for Road Inter Hospital Transfer (IHT) of Critically Ill Patients
- Guideline for the implementation of the Clinical Initiatives Nurse (CIN) role on Emergency Departments.
- Australasian College for Emergency Medicine Statement On Emergency Department Overcrowding 2011
- National Partnership Agreement on Hospital and Health Workplace Reform 2011
- Patient Flow Strategy Queensland Health 2010
- Metropolitan Emergency Department Access Initiative ambulance ramping report 2012

Business area contact

Clinical Access and Redesign Unit, Health Service and Clinical Innovation Division

Review

This directive will be reviewed at least every three years.

Date of last review: N/A

Supersedes: New Health Service Directive

Approval and Implementation

Directive Custodian

Deputy Director-General, Health Service and Clinical Innovation Division

Approval by Chief Executive

Dr Tony O'Connell

Director-General

Queensland Health

Approval date: 18/12/2012

Definitions of terms used in this directive

Term	Definition / Explanation / Details	Source
Hospital and Health Services	Hospital and Health Services are statutory bodies with Hospital and Health Boards, accountable to the local community and the Queensland Parliament	Health Reform Queensland website http://www.health.qld.gov.au/health-reform/default.asp
Queensland Ambulance Service	A service relating to the work of rendering emergency treatment and patient care to, and the transport of, sick and injured persons.	<i>Ambulance Service Act 1991</i>
Clinical Initiatives Nurses	Clinical Initiative Nurse (CIN) role is to provide care to patients in the emergency department waiting room. The CIN role is separate and distinct from the triage nurse role.	Metropolitan Emergency Department Access Initiative (MEDAI) Report Queensland Health, 2012.
Ambulance bypass	A situation whereby an emergency department instructs the ambulance service to divert ambulances elsewhere, and hence bypass the nearest emergency department.	MEDAI Report, Queensland Health, 2012

Issued under section 47 of the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*